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TO : The Secretary
THROUGH: S/S
FROM : IIR - Roger Hillsman

October 17, 1962

INTELLIGENCE NOTE: MOSCOW PUSHES DRIVE FOR AIR LINKS TO HAVANA

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New Route Includes Senegal, Brazil. Following the sudden cancellation of planned Aeroflot flights to Havana via Conakry because of Guinea's refusal to grant onward rights to Latin America, the USSR has now scheduled two flights to Havana via Dakar. A TU-114 flight leaving Moscow October 17 will stop only at Dakar enroute, and an IL-16 flight scheduled for October 22 will fly via Belgrade-Rabat-Dakar-Recife-Trinidad.

Significance. Faced with a squeeze on maritime shipping, air transport takes on added significance for Moscow in its accelerated build-up in Cuba and the increasingly complex servicing requirements for Soviet equipment and installations there. Regular flights to Havana by the TU-114, the world's largest civil aircraft, could contribute valuable logistical support through rapid delivery of high-priority cargo and personnel.

Soviet Objective. Recently the USSR has been making increased numbers of IL-18 flights to Cuba via Scotland and Newfoundland. The possibility of British-Canadian denial of this route, however, sharpens Moscow's need for an air route to Cuba which avoids all NATO territory. Flights via Guinea, Senegal and Brazil meet this requirement, although at the present time specific permission must be obtained for each flight. Their denial, and interdiction of Soviet flights on the North Atlantic route, would seriously limit Soviet civil air access to Cuba.

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